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COVID-19 Newsletter (vol. 59)

Center for Disaster Medicine, New York Medical College



NEW YORK MEDICAL COLLEGE

A MEMBER OF THE Touro College and University System

Center for Disaster Medicine



Tuesday, February 16, 2021

During this COVID-19 pandemic and other future events, the CDM has been and will continue to be a source of reliable information, education and models for mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. We hope this informational document has helped provide you filtered and actionable information. As the pace of new information and changes occur, we will evaluate the current once per week to determine if this information should be provided on a more frequent basis.

David Markenson, M.D., M.B.A.

Director

Center for Disaster Medicine

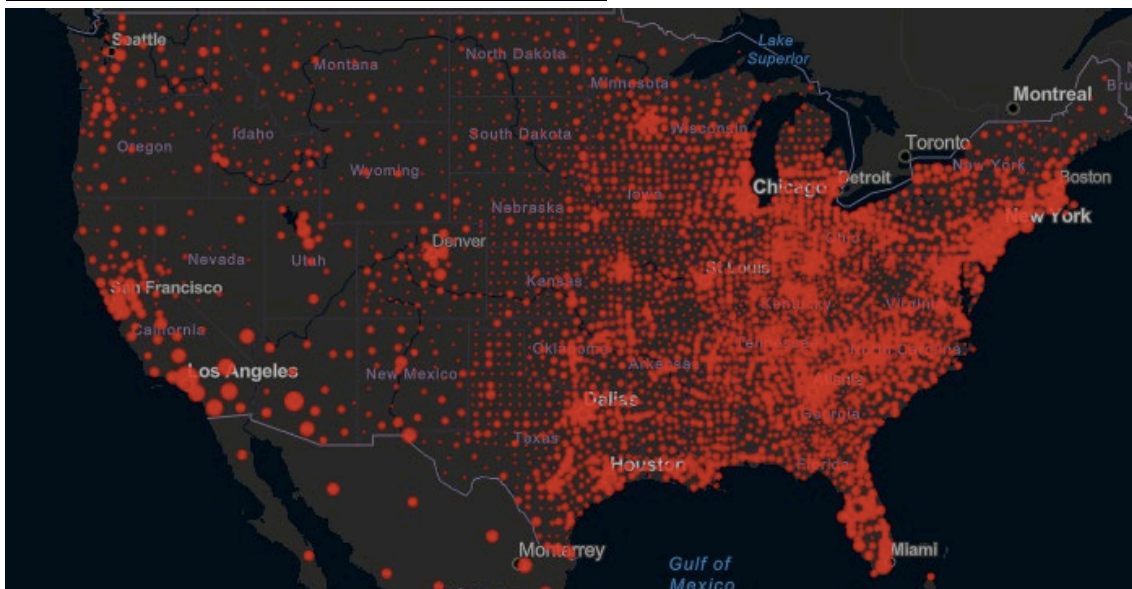
COVID-19 Statistics

	Total Cases	Total Deaths	Total Recovered	Total Tested
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Worldwide	109,142,162	2,407,607	61,322,792	Not Available
United States	27,692,689	486,317	Not Available	332,613,552
New Jersey	747,432	22,466	72,336	10,081,147
New York	1,546,408	46,000	138,542	35,217,456
Connecticut	270,242	7,447	9,800	6,312,225

Information as of 2/16/21 at 0000 EST. Source: <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html>

United States COVID-19 Case Map / GIS



Center for Disaster Medicine Updates

- Coordinating and overseeing COVID-19 screenings at NYMC campus
- Continue to partner with local agencies such as Westchester Department of Emergency Services to ensure ongoing collaboration with all public safety agencies.
- Coordinating volunteers to support local public health response to COVID-19.
- Conducting research and analysis of current events and COVID-19 response to identify strengths and areas for improvement in other regions.
- Updating and developing new programs to provide enhanced education on public health emergencies including pandemics.

- Exploring course development opportunities in infection prevention and control for frontline responders in the hospital and in the field.
- Serving as a source of information for COVID-19 related concerns or questions regarding public health, emergency medical service (EMS), public safety and healthcare response.
- Local networking and pandemic response analysis for New York's tri-state area, using first-person experiences to highlight current trends.
- Hosted The COVID-19 MCI: What Training Didn't Prepare Us For
- COVID-19 Vaccines: Virtual Q & A Session

To view the Center for Disaster Medicine's newest webinar, please click here - [The COVID-19 Vaccine: What to Tell Your Patients](#)

Federal Updates

- Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care facilities are receiving a one-time supplemental allocation of 200,000 Moderna COVID-19 vaccine doses this week from the Department of Health and Human Services. This distribution is in addition to VA's normally scheduled delivery of approximately 125,000 doses of both Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines each week. VA facilities already receiving the Moderna vaccine, as well as several new sites, will get additional doses this week from the supplemental allocation. VA is currently providing vaccines at more than 215 sites nationally and is reaching out to Veterans who are currently eligible for vaccination. <https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5619>

The White House

The official website of the White House will deliver bold action and immediate relief for American families as the country grapples with converging crises. This will include actions to control the COVID-19 pandemic, provide economic relief, tackle climate change, and advance racial equity and civil rights, as well as immediate actions to reform our immigration system and restore America's standing in the world.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov>

Health and Human Services (HHS)

HHS provides an update to the Provider Relief Fund which supports American families, workers, and the heroic healthcare providers in the battle against the COVID-19 outbreak. HHS is distributing \$178 billion to hospitals and healthcare providers on the front lines of the coronavirus response.

<https://www.hhs.gov/coronavirus/cares-act-provider-relief-fund/index.html>

For the latest COVID-19 information from HHS

<https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/coronavirus/index.html>

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

Masks help protect the people wearing them from getting or spreading SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, but now researchers from the National Institutes of Health have added evidence for yet another potential benefit for wearers: The humidity created inside the mask may help combat respiratory diseases such as COVID-19.

<https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/researchers-propose-humidity-masks-may-lesser-severity-covid-19>

A new study has identified early risk factors that predicted heightened anxiety in young adults during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The findings from the study, supported by the National Institutes of Health and published in the *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, could help predict who is at greatest risk of developing anxiety during stressful life events in early adulthood and inform prevention and intervention efforts.

<https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/study-identifies-risk-factors-elevated-anxiety-young-adults-during-covid-19-pandemic>

Enrollment has begun to test additional investigational drugs in the Accelerating COVID-19 Therapeutic Interventions and Vaccines (ACTIV) program. ACTIV is a public-private partnership program to create a coordinated research strategy that prioritizes and speeds development of promising COVID-19 treatments and vaccines. The new agents entering the randomized, placebo-controlled study are part of ACTIV-2, an adaptive trial designed to test investigational agents in non-hospitalized adult volunteers experiencing mild to moderate COVID-19 symptoms. ACTIV-2 is sponsored by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), one of the National Institutes of Health, and is led by the NIAID-funded AIDS Clinical Trials Group (ACTG).

<https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/four-potential-covid-19-therapeutics-enter-phase-2-3-testing-nih-activ-2-trial>

Longstanding obstacles to include pregnant and lactating people in clinical research have led to this population now deciding whether or not to receive a SARS-CoV-2 vaccine without the benefit of scientific evidence, writes Diana W. Bianchi, M.D., director of the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), part of the National Institutes of Health, and colleagues.

<https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/nih-calls-greater-inclusion-pregnant-lactating-people-covid-19-vaccine-research>

View the latest COVID-19 information from NIH

<https://www.nih.gov/coronavirus>

United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

As of February 12, 2021, 327 tests and sample collection devices are authorized by the FDA under emergency use authorizations (EUAs). These include 243 molecular tests and sample collection devices, 70 antibody tests, and 14 antigen tests. There are 35 molecular authorizations that can be used with home-collected samples. There is one molecular prescription at-home test, one antigen prescription at-home test, and one over-the-counter (OTC) at-home antigen test.

<https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-february-12-2021>

FDA has issued a new guidance to provide recommendations to health care providers and investigators on the use of COVID-19 convalescent plasma under the EUA or investigational convalescent plasma under an IND during the public health emergency. <https://www.fda.gov/vaccines-blood-biologics/investigational-new-drug-ind-or-device-exemption-ide-process-cber/recommendations-investigational-covid-19-convalescent-plasma>

For the latest overall FDA information about COVID-19
<https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/counterterrorism-and-emerging-threats/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

CDC provides transcript from meeting with media held on February 12, 2021-
<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/t0212-cdc-update-covid-19.html>

CDC provides update on COVID-19 cases caused by variants in the United States.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/transmission/variant-cases.html>

For daily updates of cases in United States
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/cases-in-us.html>

For the latest CDC information
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/index.html>

Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)

In accordance with the Executive Order signed by President Biden, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is announcing that the Special Enrollment Period (SEP) for the Health Insurance Marketplace® will officially be available to consumers in the 36 states that use the HealthCare.gov platform on Monday, February 15, and will continue through Saturday, May 15. At least 13 States plus the District of Columbia, which operate their own Marketplace platforms, have decided to offer a similar opportunity.
<https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2021-special-enrollment-period-marketplace-coverage-starts-healthcaregov-monday-february-15>

View the latest information from CMS
<https://www.cms.gov/About-CMS/Agency-Information/Emergency/EPRO/Current-Emergencies/Current-Emergencies-page>

Vaccines

In this section, vaccine-related information from various sources will be collected, reviewed, and tabulated here.

As of February 16, 2021, the FDA has granted Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) only to Pfizer BioNTech and Moderna. As additional vaccines are granted EUA, information for those vaccines will also be included. The COVID-19 vaccines are here. Supply from the Federal Government is extremely limited. Additional New Yorkers will become eligible as the vaccine supply increases. While the vaccination process is underway, every New Yorker should wear a mask, social distance and avoid small and large gatherings. Governor Cuomo revised the eligibility list of persons to include any New Yorker of any age with certain comorbidities and underlying conditions effective February 15, 2021.
<https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/phased-distribution-vaccine#phase-1a---phase-1b>

The new NYS DOH COVID-19 Vaccine Tracker Dashboard will update New Yorkers on the distribution of the vaccine including the number of doses received by the state, a breakdown of first or second doses, and the number of persons vaccinated with the first and second doses in each region.
<https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/covid-19-vaccine-tracker>

NYS DOH releases instructions for New York State-operated vaccination sites
<https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/>

For NYC DOHMH updated guidance regarding COVID-19 vaccine
<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-vaccines.page>

The Vaccine Finder is a one-stop site for New Yorkers to find their nearest COVID-19 vaccination location. The Vaccine Finder can also provide New Yorkers with information to schedule vaccination appointments.
<https://vaccinefinder.nyc.gov/>

The Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research (CBER) at the FDA is monitoring the safety of authorized COVID-19 vaccines through both passive and active safety surveillance systems. CBER is doing so in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and other academic and large non-government healthcare data systems.
<https://www.fda.gov/vaccines-blood-biologics/safety-availability-biologics/covid-19-vaccine-safety-surveillance>

CDC created this section regarding the Moderna vaccine to provide updated relevant information including side effects and safety data, clinical trials demographic statistics, and information on how the vaccine works.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines/Moderna.html>

CDC created this section regarding the Pfizer BioNTech vaccine to provide updated relevant information including side effects and safety data, clinical trials demographic statistics, and information on how the vaccine works.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines/Pfizer-BioNTech.html>

CDC created this section regarding COVID-19 vaccinations in the United States.
<https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations>

HHS created this section to provide the latest information about COVID-19 vaccines.

<https://www.hhs.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/index.html>

Educational Institution Information

- Health Professions Schools
 - Nothing to Report
- Higher Education
 - As states continue fine-tuning their plans for prioritizing scarce doses of COVID-19 vaccines, some in higher education who expected to be vaccinated along with other educators have found themselves pushed farther back in line. About half of all states are already vaccinating K-12 teachers. But while some states are treating college educators the same as teachers for prioritization purposes, many are not. Some states are prioritizing K-12 workers first and scheduling higher education workers for later vaccination phases, while other states are seemingly not giving any prioritization to higher education workers and are instead leaving them to be vaccinated according to wherever they fall in line among the general population. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2021/02/15/evolving-patchwork-approaches-how-states-prioritize-educators-covid-vaccines-raises>
- K-12
 - The shift to remote learning makes it difficult for teachers to get a sense of students' comprehension of the material, Sarah Kesty, a middle school special education teacher, wrote for Edutopia. She suggested rather than trying to decipher students' understanding of the subjects over remote connections, educators should teach students how to advocate for themselves. Empowering students means giving them tools to ask for help and to then apply that help, using strategies to self-assess — such as thinking out loud and stopping to write down information — so they know whether they are learning. It's also important to give students prompts on how and when to ask for help in live sessions, as well as ways to frame their questions, and to encourage them after they ask by thanking them for the “great question” or telling them they did a good job reaching out for help. <https://www.k12dive.com/news/distance-learning-highlights-need-to-equip-students-with-self-advocacy-skill/595001/>
 - The novel coronavirus has forced school health staff to take temperatures, isolate and quarantine the sick, trace the contacts of the infected, and monitor the virus' prevalence in schools. The pandemic also created another daunting scenario: the need to respond to alarming drops in students' regularly scheduled immunizations, well-child health and dental check-ups, vision and hearing screenings and more. Combe said school nurses are currently filling a healthcare gap by connecting students and families with providers through telehealth and going directly to community locations to monitor children's well-being and to educate families on the importance of preventative screenings. Luna agrees: “The school nurse is the eyes and ears of the school population and the community. They address the physical, the mental, the emotional, just all

the social health needs of the student.”

<https://www.k12dive.com/news/school-nurses-respond-to-drops-in-preventive-child-health-services/594807/>

Clinical Trials

To view the latest information on 4,636 clinical trials regarding COVID-19

<https://www.clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/results?recrs=&cond=Covid19&term=&cntry=&state=&city=&dist=>

American Red Cross

<https://www.redcrossblood.org/donate-blood/dlp/plasma-donations-from-recovered-covid-19-patients.html>

State Updates

New York

- Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced that given the continued decline in hospitalization and infection rates throughout New York, closing times for restaurants and bars will be extended from 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. statewide beginning Sunday, February 14. <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-restaurant-and-bar-closing-times-be-extended-11-pm-statewide-beginning>
- Governor Cuomo updated New Yorkers on the state's vaccination program and announced that individuals with comorbidities and underlying conditions can use the 'Am I Eligible' website starting February 14. As of 11 a.m. February 13, New York's health care distribution sites have received 2,129,135 first doses and already administered 90 percent or 1,923,259 first dose vaccinations and 83 percent of first and second doses. The week 9 allocation from the federal government continues being delivered to providers for administration. <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-mass-vaccination-sites-increase-capacity-individuals-comorbidities-and>
- Governor Cuomo announced that the Metropolitan Transportation Authority will partially restore overnight service on the New York City Subway, pending continued positive trends in New York's COVID indicators. Effective Monday, February 22, the MTA will extend late-night subway service by two hours, moving to a 2 a.m. - 4 a.m. closure daily. The changes will lengthen the subway's operations by two hours while enabling the MTA to continue the most aggressive deep cleaning and disinfecting regimen in its history. Since May 6th, the subway has been closed nightly from 1 a.m. to 5 a.m. to allow the MTA to enhance cleaning and disinfecting of the subway. <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-mta-partially-restore-overnight-subway-service>

New York State Department of Health (DOH)

For a list of positive cases by county in New York State

<https://covid19tracker.health.ny.gov/views/NYS-COVID19-Tracker/NYSDOHCOVID-19Tracker-Map?%3Aembed=yes&%3Atoolbar=no&%3Atabs=n>

NYS DOH has created a dynamic COVID-19 Tracker which provides COVID-19 information regarding testing, cases, percentages, and fatalities across New York State. It also breaks down cases by county.

<https://covid19tracker.health.ny.gov/views/NYS-COVID19-Tracker/NYSDOHCOVID-19Tracker-Map?%3Aembed=yes&%3Atoolbar=no&%3Atabs=n>

For the latest COVID-19 information from NYS DOH

<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>

New Jersey

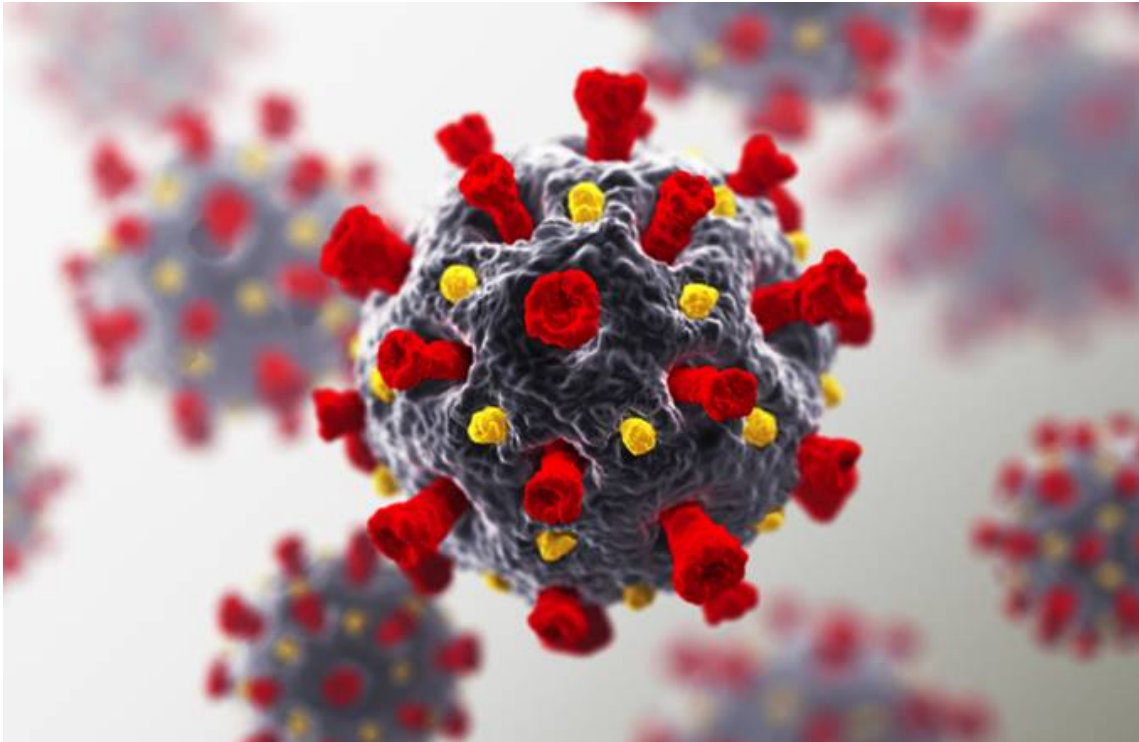
- Governor Phil Murphy announced Executive Order No. 220, which enables indoor and outdoor youth sporting events to allow parents or guardians to attend practices or competitions. The executive order will take effect immediately. Under the executive order, up to two parents or guardians per athlete under the age of 21 will be able to attend indoor or outdoor youth sports practices and competitions. No other spectators are permitted, and even with the parents or guardians, indoor youth sporting events may never exceed 35 percent capacity or 150 people. All spectators must follow the Department of Health's sports activities guidance including mask requirements, social distancing guidelines, and staying home when sick. Spectators will be expected to cooperate with contact-tracing efforts. School districts will retain the ability to impose stricter guidelines and not allow spectators, and also have the discretion on whether and when to implement today's policy regarding parents or guardians.
<https://nj.gov/infobank/eo/056murphy/pdf/EO-220.pdf>
- Governor Murphy announced the launch of a community-based vaccination partnership to provide equitable access of the COVID-19 vaccine to underserved communities throughout New Jersey. The community-based vaccination sites are supported through a partnership by the New Jersey Department of Health, New Jersey Office of Emergency Management, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and U.S. Department of Defense, in addition to local faith leaders, nonprofit organizations, local officials, and health departments. The initial phase of the community-based vaccination partnership will include sites in Somerset, Trenton, Elizabeth, Vineland, and Paterson.

These cities have been strategically selected as they have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and are some of the most diverse and socio-economically challenged communities in the state. The community-based vaccination partnership will vaccinate 15,000 residents through the end of March and launches on Monday, February 15 at the First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens in Somerset.

<https://nj.gov/governor/news/news/562021/approved/20210212b.shtml>

Connecticut

- The Connecticut Department of Public Health announced on February 12, 2021 that 22 additional cases of the B117 coronavirus variant have been identified in Connecticut, bringing the statewide total to 42 confirmed cases. Specimen collection dates from these newly identified cases were from between January 12 and February 3, 2021, and the ages of the individuals involved range from 5 to 90. <https://portal.ct.gov/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Press-Releases/2021/02-2021/Governor-Lamont-Coronavirus-Update-February-12>



Local Updates

New York Blood Center (NYBC)

New York Blood Center is putting out the call for blood donors following the winter storm that blew through New York City. Because of the blizzard, 1,500 fewer blood donations were made, all community blood drives were cancelled, and donor centers had to be closed early. NYBC needs New Yorkers to come in and donate to rebuild the blood supply.

<https://www.nybc.org/news/articles/following-historic-blizzard-nycs-blood-supply-dangerously-low/>

For the latest updated NYBC information about COVID-19:

<https://nybc.org/covid-19/>

New York City (NYC) Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH)

For NYC DOHMH updated COVID-19 data page

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-data.page>

For the latest COVID-19 information from NYC DOHMH

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-main.page>

Westchester County Department of Health

For the latest breakdown of positive cases in Westchester County as of February 14, 2021

<https://wcgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/280339d96db14efd9cc304dba0f3a71d>

For the latest COVID-19 information in Westchester including how to avoid the latest vaccine scams offering earlier access to vaccines.

<https://health.westchestergov.com/2019-novel-coronavirus>

Putnam County Department of Health

Breakdown of positive cases by towns in Putnam County as of February 8, 2021

<https://www.putnamcountyny.com/breakdown-of-positive-cases-by-towns-in-putnam-county-2-8-2021/>

For the latest COVID-19 information

<https://www.putnamcountyny.com/health/coronavirus/>

Dutchess County Department of Health

Breakdown of positive cases in Dutchess County as of February 15, 2021

<https://dcny.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/8905f4428f3148d0bffd50a2f3e4db11>

For the latest COVID-19 information:

<https://www.dutchessny.gov/Departments/DBCH/2019-Novel-Coronavirus.htm>

Orange County Department of Health

Updated COVID-19 dashboard for Orange County, NY as of February 10, 2021

<https://ocnygis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/21de1fb5ce0c480f95dc0cf2b8b83b71>

For the latest COVID-19 information

<https://www.orangecountygov.com/1906/2019-Novel-Coronavirus-Information>

Rockland County Department of Health

Review Rockland County's dashboard with the latest COVID-19 information regarding cases as of February 11, 2021

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/d074e0336e81449393a76d1768ceb096>

For the latest COVID-19 information

<https://rocklandgov.com/departments/health/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Healthcare

GNHYHA provides a New York City Vaccine Update: Certification of Eligible Medical Conditions- The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) has emailed additional guidance to New York City-enrolled vaccinators about certifying COVID-19 vaccine eligibility for individuals with certain health conditions.

<https://www.gnyha.org/news/new-york-city-vaccine-update-certification-of-eligible-medical-conditions/>

The New York State Department of Health (DOH) has issued Week 10 guidance effective February 15. Starting on February 15, COVID-19 vaccine eligibility expands to individuals with certain co-morbidities and underlying conditions. These individuals are eligible for vaccination at State-operated mass vaccination sites. In addition, hospitals and other vaccine providers should work with their local health department (LHD) to arrange for vaccinating individuals with co-morbidities and underlying conditions.

<https://www.gnyha.org/news/new-york-state-week-10-vaccine-guidance/>

For the latest COVID-19 information for healthcare facilities from the Greater New York Hospital Association that covers hospitals in the tri-state area.

<https://www.gnyha.org/>



Center for Disaster Medicine Media

New York Medical College Leadership News:

The COVID-19 vaccines are a triumph of medicine

Modern Healthcare

2/11/2021

<https://www.modernhealthcare.com/opinion-editorial/covid-19-vaccines-are-triumph-medicine?>

(subscription required)

Edward C. Halperin, M.D., M.A., chancellor and chief executive officer

Faculty News:

Can COVID-19 Cause You to Lose Your Hair?

AARP

2/9/2021

<https://www.aarp.org/health/conditions-treatments/info-2021/hair-loss-covid.html>

Shoshana Marmon, M.D., Ph.D., clinical assistant professor of dermatology

Doctor discusses Johnson & Johnson's COVID-19 vaccine

CBS News

2/5/2021

<https://www.cbsnews.com/video/doctor-discusses-johnson-johnsons-covid-19-vaccine/?intcid=CNM-00-10abd1h>

Robert G. Lahita, M.D., Ph.D., professor of medicine

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